

esprit orchestra

Alex Pauk music director and conductor

98 . 99
concert season



All New: World Premieres

Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre
Tuesday March 9, 1999

esprit orchestra

Alex Pauk music director and conductor

programme

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Jane Mallett Theatre

8:00 p.m.

All New (World Premieres)

guest artist Erica Goodman, harp

composer

*May they come, may they disembark
may they stay and rest awhile in peace*
1994

Klaus Hinrich Stahmer
(Germany)

Concerto for Harp and Orchestra
1999

Alex Pauk
(Canada)

Intermission

Axle
1999

Chris Paul Harman
(Canada)

Resonant Twilight
for orchestra and tape,
1999

Paul Dolden
(Canada)

The premiere of Mr. Stahmer's work is sponsored by
the Franz Grothe Stiftung München Germany.

Join us in the lobby after the concert for coffee.
Tonight's concert is being taped for archives.

May they come,
may they disembark, may they
stay and rest awhile in peace
Klaus Stabmer

During my early years as a music student Henry Miller's book *Colossus of Maroussi* was one of the strongest impressions I ever experienced. It was written in 1939 and describes Miller's attitude against the war. Visiting the ancient site of Epidaurus in Greece the author ponders over the question why people enter into a war and finds the answer within his own personality. Thus Epidaurus becomes a spiritual turning point in his life. Since then he is capable to experience the sensation of beauty and peace. Looking from the Greek hills down to the Mediterranean sea he traces battleships as they move cautiously through the bottleneck between the islands and Corinth and speaks a blessing over the whole mankind. Miller made his peace with himself. "Triumphantly" (as he put it) he carried his "ego to its last summit" and delivered it there. "At that moment I was free of possessions, free of all ties, free of envy and malice. I was never more certain that life and death are one and that neither can be enjoyed or embraced if the other be absent."

These wonderful words that Henry Miller found at Epidauris never left my memory and be-

came the nucleus for a requiem composition that I wrote in the early seventies with the author's consent to it. But in 1994 I decided to rework the piece and make it a larger scale composition since the heartpiece of my work, the "dona eis requiem", could no longer satisfy my expectations. Twenty years ago it was written in a more or less impersonal fancy style, and so I took it as the germ of a more developed movement. For me numerical order has the quality or better said serves as a guarantee for the listener's benefit. My mathematical calculations at the point of launching a new composition serve the same purpose as they do when an architect starts proving the proportions and the stability of a cathedral. The person who enters such a building may not know anything about the logic of mathematical procedures but will most probably experience the sensation of beauty and perfection. This is what I tried to achieve when I gave thorough plannings to my piece.

Every detail, may it sound arbitrary to the listener or not has its "just" place. The "Sho"-like chords (Strings and Winds) and "Koto" patterns (Piano, Celesta, Vibraphone and Harp) which I took from my childhood experience with Japanese court music,

the "raga"-structure of the chords and the "tala"-ornamentation in the hand-drum which remind me of my encounters with an Indian Vihna-musician during my studies in England, everything was given in good proportion and the timing according to rules which I invented. But neglecting the fact that solid construction warrants a certain *stato* reliability, I wish my listeners that they can "feel" the sensation of sound such as I can when listening to a beautiful tone-colour. My wish I have for my audience is simply what is expressed in Miller's words "may they come, may they disembark, may they stay and rest awhile in peace". My requiem is not funeral music but an everyday prayer for peace. As Miller puts it in his book: "There is no trace of ugliness here either in line, colour, form, feature or sentiment. One stops searching. One grows silent. Peace is at the centre."

**Concerto
for Harp and Orchestra
*Alex Pauk***

"Erica Goodman is recognized as the most prodigious Canadian harpist when it comes to the development of new music. Her assured approach to performing in many styles and her technical prowess are legendary in the music world. When she asked me to compose a concerto for her, I was

happy and grateful to be presented with the broad range of high caliber musicality she has to offer.

I chose to write a work in five movements reflecting Erica's diversity and incorporating a few of the characteristics that have shown up in much of my work over the years - namely, a type of suspended, floating music along with music influenced by harmonies and rhythms from the jazz and pop worlds.

The movements are titled:

- I. Floating World
- II. Riffs
- III. Cadenza
- IV. Embrace
- V. Salsalito

The harp part in its entirety was composed first. With a few adjustments, it is also intended to be playable as a solo without accompaniment. In composing the orchestral parts, I decided to embrace and enhance the harp material rather than pit the orchestra against the harp as in normal concerto form. The usual flashy glissandi and arpeggios associated with harp concerti have also been avoided. Instead, the player's virtuosity is revealed in such things as the ability to achieve the tricky pedal changes needed to bring the piece off. The piece also tests the player's mettle in terms of accu-

racy in rhythm and inflection while playing in the proper tempi.

Axle

Chris Paul Harman

In writing this piece, I wanted to pay tribute to the artistic director of the Esprit Orchestra, who has brought so many Canadian orchestral works to life over the past fifteen years. As Alex was preparing the premiere of his new harp concerto for the same concert, I decided to use his work as the foundation for my own.

After many attempts to graft new music onto whole uninterrupted sections of the concerto, I gradually started to work with smaller and smaller fragments, finally arriving at a twelve note set, which represents the most pervasive intervallic successions in the piece.

Axle is comprised of several sections, each of which are separated by a precisely timed silence, which serves not only to absorb the energy of the previous episode, but hopefully to reduce the linear expectation on the part of the listener. To this end, the gestures of the work tend toward dramatic extremes, and the succession of the gestures generally reflects the greatest possible contrasts.

Axle was commissioned in 1998 by the Esprit Orchestra through the Canada Council for the Arts. The work is dedicated to Alex Pauk.

Resonant Twilight

Paul Dolden

Resonant Twilight is part of my most recent body of work called the Twilight Cycle. These works are inspired by the concept of twilight, it refers to the time between states. I use it as a metaphor for our own time situated between millennium. In short I have tried to capture the slow dream-like state of transformation and also a state of impatience or anticipation suggested by the changing tempos density and moods.

Concerto for Harp and Orchestra was commissioned by Erica Goodman and made possible with the support of the Ontario Arts Council.

Resonant Twilight and *Axle* were commissioned by Esprit Orchestra and made possible with the support of The Canada Council for the Arts.

Erica Goodman Harpist

A native of Toronto, Erica Goodman is acclaimed as one of the world's outstanding solo harpists. She received her training at the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto), the National Music Camp (Interlochen, Michigan) and the Curtis Institute of Music (Philadelphia). Already a concert performer in her teens, Ms. Goodman played under the baton of Igor Stravinsky when he recorded in Toronto. While at Curtis, she was a concerto soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra. She has appeared as a soloist at numerous international festivals, as well as with leading orchestras and ensembles in Canada, the United States and Europe. Ms. Goodman made her New York debut as a soloist with the National Arts Centre Orchestra during that orchestra's American debut concert at Lincoln Centre in 1972.

Recent concerts include: The Tanglewood Music Festival, L.S.A.; Wigmore Hall, London; The Royal Palace, Stockholm; The Yatsugatake Music Festival, Japan; The Canadian Embassy, Washington, D.C. As Canada's foremost studio harpist, Erica Goodman has played in hundreds of radio and TV productions, commercials and film scores. In addition, Ms. Goodman has performed on stage and national television with such

stars as Percy Faith, Tony Bennett, Henry Mancini, Hagood Hardy and Gene DiNovi.

Ms. Goodman can be heard on several recordings for the BIS, Marquis, Opening Day and CBC labels with such artists as Robert Aitken, Paul Brodie, James Campbell, the Amadeus Ensemble and in solo concert. In 1980, Erica Goodman won the Grand Prix du Disque Canada for her recording, "Flute and Harp" with Robert Aitken. In 1995, she won a Juno for her solo album, "Erica Goodman Plays Canadian Harp Music". Now Magazine selected her as Best Classical Musician in its 1996 "Best of Toronto" readers' poll. She continues to be an active member of the music scene in Toronto.

Alex Pauk composer

Conductor and composer Alex Pauk has been a leading exponent of Canadian new music ever since graduating from the University of Toronto in 1971. Settling in Vancouver in the early 1970s, Mr. Pauk helped establish the new music group, Days Months and Years to Come, for which he was music Director and Conductor until 1979. While in Vancouver,

he devoted himself to composing and was named Vancouver's Musician of the Year, in 1975. Mr. Pauk returned to Toronto in 1983 and continued to expand his catalogue of works. In 1983 he founded the Esprit Orchestra for which he is music director and conductor. He has since become known as one of Canada's most distinguished conductors and composers.

Mr. Pauk has written more than 35 concert works and has received commissions from CBC Radio, Vancouver New Music Society and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, among others. His work spans a vast range of musical genres and stylistic tendencies. Mr. Pauk has written orchestral, choral and chamber music, as well as, radiophonic montages, electronic music, theatre pieces, and incidental music for the theatre. His work has reached international acclaim and is frequently performed and broadcast throughout Europe, the United States, the Soviet Union, Latin America and Canada. Pieces of special interest in Mr. Pauk's creative output are those which incorporate various kinds of ethnic music in the contemporary idiom. For example, his orchestral work *Mirage* (1984) explores the folk music of Eastern Europe through a process of harmonic and rhythmic layering.

Mr. Pauk's extensive background

in the field of pop music, combined with his knowledge of twentieth-century concert music, enables him to also maintain an active career writing music for television and film. Most recently, Mr. Pauk's *Last Night* film score (co-written with composer Alexina Louie) received a 1999 Genie nomination for best original score in a Canadian feature film.

Chris Harman composer

Chris Paul Harman was born in 1970 in Toronto where he studied classical guitar, cello, and electronic music at the Royal Conservatory of Music with Barton Wigg, Alan Stellings, and Wes Wraggett respectively. His music has been performed in Ontario and Quebec by the UART MIDI Ensemble, the Composers' Orchestra, the Orchestre de Chambre de Radio-Canada, and the Esprit Orchestra. In addition, Mr. Harman has written on commission for the Festival of the Sound (Euthanasia), guitarist William Beauvais (December), and for CBC Radio (Sonata for Viola and Piano, String Quartet No.1).

In 1986, Mr. Harman was a finalist in the CBC National Radio Competition for Young Composers, and was the winner of the Grand Prize at that same competi-

tion in 1990. *Iridescence*, the work which won him the Grand Prize, was also chosen to represent Canada at the 1991 International Rostrum of Composers in Paris, where it was awarded first prize in the category for composers under 30.

Immediately before the premiere of *Elegie*, composer/conductor Gary Kulesha told his audience that "unlike much contemporary music, Chris seems to be trying to blend a number of different kinds of sounds and kinds of approaches into something that is a coherent, yet highly personal utterance". Indeed, much of what makes up Harman's compositional style is the specific amalgamation of a large number of different "modes" of musical expression such as serialism, neoromanticism, timbral exploration, aleatorism, and so forth. In addition, his technique is further diversified through an interest in other artistic media such as film and literature, which is exemplified by an individualistic treatment of such concepts as montage, cut-ups, cross-fading, and silence.

While Harman's current body of work is typified by orchestral-type works for conventional instruments (particularly string ensembles), he has also endeavoured to

broaden his instrumental means through less than mainstream instruments such as the gamelan. At the time of writing, new works are pending for the guitar, the gamelan, and the accordion.

Paul Dolden composer

Paul Dolden is a freelance composer who specializes in electroacoustic composition, writing works for solo tape and instrument(s) and tape. Works have been performed and broadcast throughout North America, Europe and Australia. He has toured with his works across Canada and throughout Europe and has received numerous commissions and grants both in Canada and in Europe. During the 1980s he won over fifteen awards for his compositions including: prizes at Bourges International Competition in France (1990, 88, 86, 84), "L. Russolo" International Competition in Italy (1986, 84), CAPAC Hugh LeCaine Award (1984, 82), CAPAC Micheline Coulombe Saint-Marcoux Competition (1987), NEWCOMP Music Competition, USA 1985, CBC National Radio Competition (1984), PRO Competition (1981). He also has worked as a guest artist at institutions such as Groupe de Musique Experimentale de Bourges in France and the EMS in Stockholm, Sweden.

Mr. Dolden is known for producing intense works which push perceptual and emotional states. The tape works usually involve 200 to 500 tracks of simultaneous acoustic instruments from the Western and Eastern musical traditions.

Each track is produced individually so as to allow for huge polyrhythmic possibilities. In addition each composition has its own tuning system designed by the composer. This recording/mixing method, combined with decisions of a compositional nature, is an attempt to produce a pure and untranslatable sound which gives a sensuous immediacy to the music. By capturing the irrationality, irregularities and complexities of acoustic sounds and human performance, the compositions suggest an alternative way of allowing human presence to be perceived through the vastness of a technology used to create them. In the works, the recording studio is used as a tool to facilitate the creation of a new music: a music which generates new thoughts, sensations and feelings: a music which peels away the skin of sound habituation to reveal vivid and unaccustomed worlds of timbre, rythym and melody.

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SOCAN salutes young composers

In its 1998 competition, The SOCAN Foundation has awarded cash prizes totalling \$17,500 to composers under 30. Warm congratulations to the winners.

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The SOCAN Foundation

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